/55 cont./

243 and a drought, ensues, an event which is greatly feared by
312 the Miao. Every second and third month plowing ceases for
731 seven days, and harrowing is avoided in order to ward off a
784 drought. The period of taboo starts from the nineteenth day of the second month to the twenty-third day, and again, from the thirtieth day of the third month to the first and second day of the fourth month. According to Miao superstition any violation during the period of taboo would bring on the disaster of
[782] a drought. Only through prayer and repentance can it be
[688] avoided. The violators are required to provide chickens and pigs for the sorcerer who stands at the highest point of the slope to offer prayer and sacrifice (called the "sacrifice to the spirit of the high slope," see the later chapter, "Magic and Religion").
243 When terraced fields come up against floods, although it is
731 not like the lack of harvesting of seeds in a drought, still often the sudden rush of mountain streams bursts through the terraced fields and destroys the structure of the fields. Moreover stones and sand often pile up, which is difficult to repair at once. Sometimes, the field is reduced to a steep incline or a deep
731 gulch beyond repair. So, the Miao people toil all year round:
648 in prosperous years they barely miss cold and starvation. In case of disaster, they are unable to look after themselves: the
[432] weak sell their children in exchange for a measure of grain;
858 the strong form gangs to plunder the countryside. When the
579 authorities press too hard on these marauders, then widespread unrest often result. Thus goes the saying: "The Miao area has a small disturbance every five years, and a large disturbance every ten years." The reason is not that the Miao are by nature fond of trouble making, but that they are driven to take dangerous risks by the pressure of poverty /Illus. 27-31 appear
[161] on pp. 56-60./ /61/ under a condition of overpopulation in a limited area. Hitherto, each suppression of a Miao disturbance by the government brought about peace, but it lasted only a few years before the outbreak of new unrest. Former administrators did not understand that the cause of the Miao disturbances

[text continues on p.89]

/31 cont./

597 In the case of adoption, very many points must be observed in accordance with Meau customs which go into great detail. Childless /32/ couples seek to adopt a child. Only children of the male or female sex up to the age of at most ten years, however, may be adopted. The couple now look for a suitable child of a mother who has especially many children, if possible of their own sib /Sippe/, and furthermore obtain the consent of the heads of both of the large families /Grossfamilien, extended families/ involved, provided that such a head of the large family exists in the case of the child to be adopted. The couple also makes this intention known to the parents of the child to be adopted. If the parents have also agreed, the childless [782] couple slaughters a chicken as a sacrifice to the god of heaven and the ancestors and informs the latter of the completed transaction by burning some chicken blood on sacred paper (see the chapter "Handicrafts"). With this the adopted child is received into the new family community with all rights and duties.

If no children of one's own sib are available, one tries to obtain a strange child. This presents difficulties if its [432] parents are still alive, for, as a rule, children are not sold. The situation is different if the parents are dead and the oldest of the orphaned siblings is not in a position to take proper care of the younger ones, as would be his duty. Such children are sold for the purpose of adoption. Sometimes special intermediaries are used for this. These are traders, usually Chinese, [648] who buy and sell children as well as all kinds of commodities (see the chapter, "Trade").

[435] For such a child, if a girl, fifty pieces of silver, for a boy about seventy, are paid. The price varies according to the age and health of the child. If the child is from one's own sib, the price is usually somewhat lower. My observations are therefore [114] contrary to the reports of the Siam. Soc. Journal (1), but

1. Vol. XVII, Part 3, p. 167.

they are not refuted by any other author.

/108 cont./

A 595 [422] [606] [179] even the clothes of the secondary wives, belong to her. Among the Akha, the position of the daughter-in-law, who is the first to be called upon for assistance in all the difficult or unpleasant work of the women, is similar to her position among the Meau, and presumably has likewise been influenced by the Chinese. Among the Akha, as among the Meau, after the wedding both sexes are required to observe marital fidelity, A M 837 684 which among the Meau at least is not always followed. If a man commits adultery with a girl, it is considered unimportant, provided that there are no consequences. If there are, the man must marry the girl or pay an indemnity agreed upon. It is different if a man commits adultery with a married woman and the affair is discovered. In this case, the seducer has to pay the deceived husband the entire bride price or he will be punished by the village chief. Moreover, the disclosure of A M [558] such a case is a terrible disgrace for the seducer, whose prestige in the community suffers greatly (see the section, "Dissolution of Marriage," in this chapter).

The obligation for marital fidelity for both sexes is stricter among the Akha than among the Meau.

A 184 837 Telford (1) reports that among the Akha of Kengtung

1. Page 108.

a married, but childless woman may have sexual intercourse now and then with an unmarried man. If she becomes pregnant, her husband has to /109/ slaughter a pig and give it to her lover. I assume that the reference to a slaughtered pig means that a sacrificial feast must be arranged.

A M 837 432 583 M 174 583 432 Wife exchange, the lending of wives, and outright wife-purchase, under which I do not include the indirect purchase for marriage described above, are equally unknown among the Meau and Akha. It can be assumed, I think, that in former times among the Meau a purchase of wives in some form as yet unknown might have been practiced. In any case this is indicated by the fact that the Meau believe it is not proper to sell the household broom, because this would be tantamount

AKha A04
MiaoAE5

/109 cont./

M 174 583 432 [648] 614 [736] to selling one's own wife. Some persons perhaps consider the intermediary activities of the Chinese traders as wife purchase (see the chapter, "Trade"). I do not think that this is correct, for, although young and pretty Meau women are sold outright by such traders, they are almost always temporarily accepted by the sib as unfree persons who are soon to marry a young man of the sib. Moreover, most of these cases concern women who have been unhappily married. I shall discuss this in detail in the section on "Dissolution of Marriage" in this chapter.

A 583 648 Contrary to the statements in the Siam Soc. Report (1),

1. I, p. 167.

I did not find any such activities by the Chinese traders among the Akha.

f) Marriage Obstacles and Regulations

M 582 648 563 Theoretically there is no tribal endogamy among the Meau in Thailand, so that here the Meau may marry their neighbors, the Tin, Kamuk, and, indeed, even Lao. Only with respect to the Yau does a strict marriage prohibition exist. Since, however, I could not find a single instance of a Meau who had married someone outside his tribe, it can probably be said that in practice even a strict tribal endogamy prevails. On the other hand, marriages between the various Meau tribes, that is, between the White and Black Meau, and so forth (see the chapter, "Statistical and Demographic Data and Differences between the Various Meau and Akha Tribes"), are common. M [114] Even Lajonquière (2), whose statements are borrowed almost

2. II, p. 193.

verbatim by Abadie (3), reports that in Indochina marriages be-

3. Page 165.

tween /110/ the various Meau tribes are customary, but those between Meau and other ethnic groups are rarer.

/240 cont./

426 paid back, including the interest. Natural products can take the place of money or silver. If /241/ the creditor and debtor cannot agree on the evaluation of the goods, the creditor will ask the debtor to sell his wares elsewhere for silver and to pay him back with it.

If the debtor is not in a position to repay the loan, he must reimburse the creditor in another way, for example, by laying out a field large enough so that the harvest will cover the sum of the loan. Therefore, if a Meau has borrowed the 21 baskets of rice mentioned, he lays out a field that will yield 28 baskets.

426 If the debtor cannot satisfy the creditor in this way, a
432 sale takes place, not of the debtor himself or his wives or his adult
858 children, but of those children who have not yet reached maturity.
[567 In this case, the debtor is obligated to give an appropriate num-
[736 ber of these children to the creditor in lieu of payment. The
[597 creditor is now free to decide whether he wants to bring up the
[435 children as unfree persons, to adopt them, or to resell them to his tribesmen or to migratory traders. If children have to be turned over to a creditor, their value is fixed at 70 pieces of silver for a boy and 50 pieces for a girl.

426 Interest is demanded only from members of other sibs
614 and is paid to such persons. Within the sib the granting of loans to sib members who need help as a result of crop failure, cattle deaths, or lightning is regarded as a sib duty.

426 The members of a large /extended/ family are not re-
596 sponsible for the debts of the head of the large family during his
768 lifetime. If the head should die before repaying his debt, however, the entire large family is jointly responsible for the amount of the debt. In like manner, the head of a large family is not responsible for the debts incurred by a member of his family without his knowledge. This is not affected by the death of the debtor. On the other hand, the head is responsible for debts incurred by a member of the large family with the knowledge and approval of the head even if the debtor should die before the debt is repaid.

/368 cont./

231 [262] [782] [184] Goats are likewise kept for meat and as sacrificial animals, but only sporadically.

Just as the farming of the Meau in Indochina is incomparably more productive than among the Meau in Thailand, so also does the animal husbandry there represent an essentially broader economic base for them. This is shown by the description that Savina (2) gives concerning this in Indochina: "The

2. II, p. 200.

Meau raise buffalo, cattle, horses, pigs, goats, sheep, chickens, ducks, and geese. The livestock is their sole [556] [276] [432] wealth; it is more valuable than money. Opium and livestock are the only things that they sell. As has been said, the cattle live freely outside in the mountains. Since they often remain away for weeks and months, the owners only rarely know how many animals they have. In the evening the cattle herd together to defend themselves against tigers. When they scent a tiger, the larger animals place themselves around the smaller ones and courageously await the enemy. At least so the Meau tell it. They very much like to praise their animals. There are families who own forty or fifty head of cattle. If all these animals were divided among all the families, each [281] [439] family would have twelve head. The hides of the slaughtered animals are dried and sold on the market.

"Horses are the usual companions of the buffalo and cattle in /369/ the pastures, but they are less wild. Every evening, they return to the village, and if they do not come by themselves, one searches for them with two ears of maize. One is given to them at the place where they are found, and with the other they are lured into the village. Buffalo and cattle are brought back with a piece of salt. This is only a matter of vilgum pecus, that is, pack horses; the good saddle [492] horses are only seldom left free; they are provided for in the stable or in a corner of the house, and their mangers are rarely [432] empty. The Meau never sell them.

/369 cont./

231 [432] "On the other hand, they do sell pigs. Few peoples raise as many pigs as the Meau. They are seen everywhere. In every family there is a pig that is petted and favored by everyone."

[422] I could learn no more about property marks on animals than other authors mention them. Informants whom I questioned explained to me that every owner knows his animals without this.

[171] Whereas most of the other peoples of Farther India practice bee-keeping, I could not find it among the Meau. Other authors, too -- with the exception of Lajonquière (1), who

1. II, p. 310.

mentions them in his enumeration of the domestic animals -- report nothing about this, and the raising of silkworms seems to be just as little known among the Meau of all the regions mentioned. I, too, was unable to find it anywhere.

Among the Meau in Thailand, one sporadically comes across so-called "mandarin blackbirds" /Mandarinenamseln/, which are said to be kept as ornamental birds and traded for high prices.

232 Among the Meau whom I visited, the castration of domestic animals is widespread. This is not limited to pigs, cattle, and horses, but includes even dogs and chickens. The animals are castrated by cutting open the scrotum, tying up the reproductive gland, and sewing up the scrotum again. An exception is made in the case of cattle, whose scrotum is clamped between sticks and smashed with a cudgel. In answer to my question as to why so cruel a procedure is used for them, the Meau were of the opinion that it was nothing for the cattle, that they are much less sensitive to pain than horses.